

# *The Individual*

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## MEETINGS

**Wednesday 26th April 1995**  
Luncheon at the House of Lords.  
Speaker: Neil Hamilton MP

This will be at 12.30 for 1.00 p.m. The price per person is £22. Please book your place *by 22nd April*. For details see page 11.

The provisional subject of Neil Hamilton's talk is "Resigning Issues" as this applies to MPs in both this country and abroad. "Are we losing valuable talent in the (hopeless) quest for moral perfection?" This topic could, of course, be changed in response to any late developments in public interests.

**Wednesday, 24th May 1995**  
**Annual General Meeting**

For further details of both meetings,  
please turn to page 11

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## EDITORIAL

The debate about Britain's place in Europe goes on, so after nearly a year we return to it as a major theme in this edition of *The Individual*. Different people consider different aspects of major importance, and it seems this is one source of confusion about the important issues. For some people economics is the major consideration to which practically anything else can be sacrificed.

But the economic argument for further European integration depends crucially on those who assume "big is beautiful" is inevitably true of markets. It doesn't seem to apply to the Pacific Rim countries unless we assume their markets are the whole world — in which case the conclusion is obvious — keep away from anything less than the whole world. For others the "obvious" explanation of the success of these economies is their low labour costs, and the equally obvious reaction is to resort to protectionism on a Europe-wide scale.

Then there are the non-economic factors. For some people the prospect of creating something comparable to the United States out of the old and often warring nation states of Europe is a glittering prize. But for others the mere attempt is almost unthinkable involving the sacrifice of both sovereignty and national identity to an unworkable and dangerous idea.

The example of the United States suggests that federations tend to become centralised, which makes the long-term maintenance of significant national independence highly improbable. But is national independence and identity all that important anyway? Perhaps the nation-state is outmoded — it is after all a relatively recent development, historically speaking. But as Sir Richard Body pointed out in the May 1994 issue, it could be the only viable political unit where "democracy" can achieve any substantial reality.

## BYE BYE, EUROPE

Teresa Gorman MP

The EEC is yesterday's story. Created in the 1950s to meet the political needs of those times, its methods and organisations are as out-of-date as the postwar Attlee government. With its Euro-wide collective policies and its "us and them" attitude to labour relations, it's like watching that scratchy old black and white movie of Peter Sellers in *I'm All Right Jack*. He would have been wonderful in the part of the puffed-up pompous Mr Delors. No business organisation would expect to cling to the same structure and ideas for forty years. The thrust of modern technology enables people to realise their own goals through economic and personal freedom.

The Social Chapter would be more at home in socialist China where geriatric communists still believe that people can be programmed by governments onto certain kinds of behaviour. It is rooted in a deep-seated suspicion that labour must be protected from wicked capitalists who would otherwise exploit them.

Delors (and Santer has turned out to be no improvement) — whose idea of new jobs is another layer of Eurocrats — calls for Euro-wide Social Compacts to cut unemployment, banning overtime and sharing out existing jobs. He is oblivious to the fact that small businesses — in the forefront of creating new jobs — need freedom and flexibility in employment if they are ever to get off the ground. The Cohesion Fund, established under the terms of the Maastricht Treaty, is designed to force every country in the Community and every occupation in it into a similar pattern of hours and wages, thus destroying the comparative advantage of every country's specialities. Innovation is the lifeblood of economic progress. By definition it kicks over the traces of accepted rules.

The European Community was founded on the memory of food shortages — even starvation — experienced in the Second World War. Hence the domination of the Common Agricultural Policy to ensure that Europe would never again be dependent on imported food.

With Russia brooding on its doorstep, intent on taking over much of Europe, there seemed a real threat of a third world war. That, and the need to keep the Germans under control, provided a powerful incentive to adopt measures which overcame the natural reluctance of sovereign states to give up their independence.

But all that changed in 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down, the Russian Empire collapsed and, with it, the rationale for an artificial economic union. The end of the cold war provided one of the windows of opportunity which politicians love to talk about. But all we hear is the fear of Eastern Europe spoiling our rigged internal markets. Like some dinosaur in Jurassic Park, the Community lumbers on, peering in every

nook and cranny of national life, trampling down national institutions. And attempting to convert 320 million disparate people into some amorphous new species known as Europeans. It would take more than Stephen Spielberg to achieve that miracle. Little by little the EEC is destroying our lifestyle and draining our economic lifeblood. Out go the hedgerows, the butchers' wooden chopping blocks, and the Cox's Orange Pippin. In come the demands to take their forty-tonne lorries, which means spending £10 billion strengthening our bridges. In come threats to punish our fishermen for doing what they have been doing for centuries. Add on a whacking great fine of £28.8 million on our steel industry for failing to conform to the European rigged steel market and you have a microcosm of bureaucracy gone mad. British housewives fork out an additional £20 per week on the cost of groceries. Pensioners are forced to pay VAT on fuel as part of the European demand for a carbon tax. And we will all get a shock as our water bills escalate in response to ridiculous demands to take every last speck of nitrate out of the water.

The membership fee for this extravagant club costs the British taxpayer £50 million each week. The fees will treble when the Cohesion Fund comes into its own. Britain's largest earner — our bank and insurance industries — are being edged out of the City of London to Frankfurt. In exchange we are getting the European Medicines Evaluation Agency. Big deal. The whole thing is the biggest con trick ever perpetrated on this nation. So why do we put up with it?

We are portrayed by Europhiles as a small island clinging to the edge of Europe unable to survive on our own. This is a very Foreign Office view of life. Europe is only 10% of the world's population producing around 15% of the world's GNPs.

I have done business around the world for the last thirty years and I can assure you that there are enormous difficulties trading with countries with similar economies in Europe. But there are enormous opportunities round the Pacific Rim, in the United States, and in South America. Most of them still use English as the language of commerce and there is a legacy of respect — even affection — for Britain. Our reputation for honesty and integrity remains intact.

"Recession? What recession?", asked a Singapore businessman in response to my enquiry. "The economies of the Pacific Rim are growing 8% to 10% per annum. But where are the British these days?" There are enormous opportunities for us to sell them new infrastructure projects. Roads, drains, bridges, cable systems, construction, pharmaceuticals and education. The French and Germans would give their eye teeth for our commercial advantages. Yet we throw them away whilst cajoling our businessmen to trade in

Europe. Now we have 60% of our eggs in one basket. What if the European recession goes on? How will our economy fare then?

Britain could be the Hong Kong of Western Europe. A low-cost, high-productivity, low-tax, high-tech, offshore island whose growth and dynamism would be in marked contrast to the recession and sclerosis of the other major European economies.

The British are great individualists, innovators and traders. Historically we have always turned our eyes outwards, seeking new markets round the globe. But we cannot sell our goods abroad whilst protecting our own markets with a barrier of tariffs, quotas, and unrealistic standards. International trade is a two-way street. GATT — which the French oppose — is clearing the way.

The idea of Europe punishing us if we turn our back on its demands is laughable. We should tell them

to go jump in the Channel. We have a £65 billion trade deficit with them, which means — simply — that they need our markets much more than we need theirs. The EU may eventually turn into a free trade area but why should we wait that long? Let us reclaim our self-respect and our independence. No political empire has ever lasted. No political union, however big, is irreversible. But how to convert the Conservative Party? Under the present leadership it seems impossible; it would be ironic if Labour were to do it instead.

Bye bye, Europe. Hello, big wide world.

*Mrs Gorman is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Billericay (now "whipless").*

## TREATY ON EUROPEAN UNION INCLUDING THE PROTOCOLS AND FINAL ACT WITH DECLARATIONS: Maastricht, 7 February 1992

David Gibbon

According to a free booklet available from all public libraries, "the Government don't want, and won't have, a United States of Europe". The photograph of John Major on page one should be enough to expose this claim as a lie. But having now read my way through the whole Maastricht Treaty, I feel as certain as any reasonable being can that the twelve Member States of the European Community stand today where the thirteen American States stood in 1787. The only essential difference is that the federal administration will be far less liberal at its outset, and that far less than 150 years will be needed for Brussels to stand where Washington stood in 1937.

Bearing in mind what discussion the Treaty has already received, I will not waste time in describing the common European citizenship and the wide powers of compulsion set forth in its various articles. I will instead ask to what extent these ought to be deplored.

Now, I remain as patriotic and as proud of my country's past as when, at the age of five, I first opened my *History of England as Told for the Very Young*. This country was the birthplace of both liberalism and industrial capitalism. From this country was ruled one of the greatest empires — and certainly the most benevolent — that has ever existed. Take away the achievements and the example of the British people, and the world would be an incomparably more evil place, bereft alike of progress and of hope.

But note here the absence of the present tense. We live today in what was a great country. Our Empire, our power in the world, our comparative wealth — and far more important than these, the freedom from which they derived — are vanished. Our decline was astonishingly swift, and filled far less than the space of a single lifetime. But it has been accomplished. Whatever our grandparents and parents were — whatever we were born to become — we are the citizens of an impoverished welfare state; and if present trends are allowed to continue, we shall assuredly die the citizens of an impoverished police state.

The European Community offers an alternative to this rapid and continuing decline. In one way or another, its internal market already includes the whole of western Europe, and will soon be extended sharply east. This hardly approximates to the whole world which was our market before 1931. But it is respectably large; and the treaties that created it restrain the protectionism that guided our trade policies between 1931 and 1973, and would certainly otherwise guide it now. Added to free trade is sound finance. The present Treaty prohibits excessive budget deficits and currency devaluations. Again, this is a poor alternative to the fully convertible gold standard and balanced budgets that once were the unquestioned norm in this country. But it is a decided improvement on what we have suffered at least since 1945.

Of course, there are costs. We shall lose our national independence — or what remainder of this we have enjoyed since we joined the Community. We shall progressively give up the national habits and institutions that even now distinguish us from every other European nation. We shall be weighed down by an increasing burden of petty and vexatious regulations. I regret these costs. But once we look behind the uproar raised against accepting them, we shall see that they are often more apparent than real.

I have read much about the torrent of nonsense issuing from Brussels on whether carrots are fruit and on where window cleaners must pour their used water. I have read rather less about how these regulations are given substance and are interpreted solely by British civil servants. Enterprise is stifled beneath a mountain of bureaucracy — but only because we already have a bureaucratic state: stop the import of regulations, and the loss will be immediately supplied by home production. Anyone familiar with the Environment Protection Act 1990, and the various forms of the National Curriculum, will appreciate the ingenuity of our own civil servants.

Regarding our national distinctions, these grow increasingly superficial. There was a time when — for

example — the Imperial system of weights and measures was part of an organic whole. It was one of many institutions that had evolved over centuries; and what it lacked in abstract convenience was more than compensated for by its practical working and the feeling of community with the past that it encouraged and allowed. As with our Constitution and currency and other eccentricities, it indicated a respect for grown tradition more conducive to an overall harmony than the brittle rationalism that other peoples were seduced into accepting as their guide.

Today, this traditional cast of mind is almost extinct among us. The customs and institutions that proceeded from it are now only inconvenient. Without their nimbus of old associations, our pounds and inches are to the metric system as trial by ordeal is to the Napoleonic Code. Our habit of driving on the left puts up the price of cars. Equally, the Common Law tends to raise the price of justice — and can even make it harder to secure. So far as we now differ from our neighbours, we differ for the worse. Though a brittle guide, rationalism is all that we now have available to us; and the more European we become in our habits, the better we shall do as a nation.

All this being said, my comments on national independence will need little room. People have no right to their own government simply by virtue of their possessing distinct national characteristics. It must, before all else, be shown that their lives and properties will be better ensured by self-government than by alien rule. Of course, we have not brought ourselves to the same wretched state as the Ugandans,

or even the Greeks. But our capacity to make good use of our independence is plainly in decline. I have mentioned the decay of our freedom. I have mentioned the incompetence of our monetary authorities. I loathe the almost certain shape of the emerging super-state in Europe, but I also suspect that it will govern this country with more benevolence and success than will a sovereign British state.

In the debate over the Maastricht Treaty, the British people stand much where the slaves and free Negroes stood during the American Civil War. The Southern leaders upheld the right of secession with endless talk of freedom and horrifying predictions of Northern misrule. Their predictions were only slightly exaggerated, and many slaves deplored the Yankee victories, and some free blacks even fought in the Confederate armies. Nevertheless, the Confederacy was a slave state, and its leaders' fine words were only a means of keeping it that way; and charlatan that Lincoln was, and racist bigots that his generals usually were, the North did have a greater degree of right on its side by most liberal standards.

I do not wish to be a European. Neither, though, will I play Uncle Tom to Lady Thatcher or her ideological successors.

[HMSO, London, 1992, 134 pp., £13.30 (Cm 1934) ISBN: 0 10 119342 4]

*David Gibbon is a lecturer in economics in one of the older "redbrick" provincial universities*

## THE SINGLE CURRENCY (AGAIN)

Paul Anderton

In those economics textbooks that go back to basics, currency is described as primarily a means of exchange. Exchange is the basis of trade and, indeed, life as we know it. Money, the currency, is a convenient substitute for direct barter and, because it can be stored without deterioration, enables long-term contracts and planning to be undertaken — assuming legal and political stability.

The assurance, or illusion, of political stability was supported by emperors and kings issuing coins with their likenesses on them. So long as the coins were made of accepted precious metals — such as the classic gold, silver or bronze — the assassination of the king or the fall of an empire didn't matter very much because the value resided in the mass of metal in the coin.

But then came banking and paper currency. Individuals left their money with goldsmiths for safe keeping and, of course, obtained a receipt. Eventually people realised that these receipts were, for trading purposes, as good as the gold they represented and paper money was invented (or perhaps more accurately "discovered"). And the goldsmiths noticed that they were never asked to repay more than about 10% of their total holding so they could lend the rest out and charge interest on it. Then, instead of requiring a fee for looking after money they began to pay depositors for leaving it with them. The basic structure of banking and paper currency as we now know it was born.

This was evidently too much of either a threat or a temptation for governments. They invented central banks with the sole legal right to issue paper money in their own territories and so national paper currencies were invented

(that's definitely the right word this time). And the currency became an important nationalist or patriotic symbol. It is important to realise this is purely "sentimental". This is not to say that it is trivial or unimportant in practice, but merely to observe, specifically, that the value ascribed to a piece of paper, endorsed by a government, *must* depend on the stability and standing of that government, particularly in its financial and economic performance.

Where coins of precious metals such as Krugerrands, Sovereigns, or Canadian Maples are still minted their value, in any paper currency, depends on the actual weight of precious metal in them to within a few percent. On the other hand the value of "paper money" can, and does, change dramatically according to supply and demand driven by both the balance of payments and "confidence".

The big political attraction of a national currency is that it enables the government to "ring fence" the economy to some extent — often a very considerable extent — by legal restrictions on the use of the national currency, and other currencies, within its own territory. This is usually described as "having control of one's own economy".

In practice this has meant enabling the government to raise and spend money independently of the normal market reactions of other countries through their currencies. Tariffs and import restrictions were the first large-scale manifestations of this. These were generally to secure an internal political advantage by placating some powerful domestic vested interests at the (hidden) expense of potential consumers.



The next stage was selective spending, mostly on social programmes of one kind or another. In turn this produces politically sensitive effects such as immigration pressure — destitute foreigners would obviously prefer to go somewhere where they are sure to get minimal guaranteed survival and possibly much more. Now “managing our own economic policies” means relaxing government spending and reducing taxes just before elections and reversing the policy soon afterwards.

Having a common European currency and central bank would actually be very much a mixed blessing. Any “sentimental” appeal similar to that associated with national currencies would be very difficult to establish. It was very difficult for America to get immigrants who had voluntarily left their native countries to regard themselves as Americans rather than exiles, even without separate currencies as constant reminders. With a long history of antipathy to certain European countries and Europe in general, this will be particularly difficult for the British.

For ordinary people — that is any who are not directly concerned with international trade — the extra convenience of one currency over a large area is welcome but hardly of critical importance. For those concerned with trade currency exchange is certainly a complication but not much of an obstacle in practice. In any case serious world trade has always been conducted in a single currency; a long time ago it was sterling then the dollar took over.

To regard the establishment of a single European currency as a sacrifice of sovereignty is obviously correct. The sacrifice is only of benefit if “Europe” can be relied on to follow more sensible economic policies than the national government. The most consistent economic policy of British governments has been continual devaluation to “solve” problems brought on by domestic inflation. Europe might be better in the short term, but in the long run who knows?

Perhaps the best example to follow is Switzerland.

## A BILL OF RIGHTS OR BIG BROTHER

Brian Legge

We, the general public, are the victims of the Mass Media. Every time one listens to the radio, turns on the television, or reads a newspaper, we are at the mercy of the MIND SNATCHERS.

Whenever we read or switch on we engage in a battle for our minds. Each political party, and religious groups of all kinds, are after our minds, bodies and souls. Our minds are bombarded on all sides with instructions, thinly disguised as advice, as if we had no free will of our own. We can be any of the standard stereotypes, but not our individual selves.

They would love to enforce upon us when to eat, sleep, go to the lavatory, and how and when to make love. They want us to be all like dogs on a lead, controlled, obedient, at the command of our masters, reduced to quivering lumps of mindless jelly; automatons; zombies. Those who think for themselves or ask awkward questions become the main target for abuse [e.g. Norman Lamont? — ed.].

We are all on the way to being computerised and under constant surveillance and presumed guilty until we can prove ourselves innocent. It is assumed that we would become criminals or go berserk if they cut our leads. This could be true for a few perhaps, especially if they have relied heavily on religious values and an authority which is no longer taken seriously.

There needs to be something to fill the vacuum left by the ever growing change from the old religious values to the modern and more secular ones. A *Bill of Rights* is what we need. Individuals will have their rights defined and protected by law. Without such a Bill we are open to abuse from all sides.

In some areas the media seem to have taken on the role of government, judge, and jury by selection and sensationalising — the jury being composed of Ignorance, Prejudice, and thinly disguised Sexism and Racism.

It is not surprising that most of the honours, awards, titles, and Lordships go to the media and entertainment world because the public suffers most abuse from these areas.

But in spite of this influence, the media are effectively controlled in *serious* matters by the government. This is by two main devices. In the first place any newspaper/TV

channel which does not “play the game” can be denied titbits of inside information and planted “leaks” so it begins to lose credibility as a news channel. In the second place anything they don’t want seriously discussed, politicians *et al.* simply don’t mention in speeches and press conferences. That way sensitive questions of principle can be kept out of discussion and possibly awkward questions avoided.

A second chamber is necessary to replace one based on privilege and wealth which should be elected on merit by the public. [A “compromise” version of this was proposed in the September 1994 edition of *The Individual* — ed.].

Three bullies dominate our lives; the physical bully, the mind bully and the spiritual bully. We are all familiar with the first one. The second one — the Media — is by far the worst. The third is terrifying only to those of a religious leaning by threats of Hell and damnation if we do not turn away from the materialistic world and the sins of the flesh.

They teach that one should only have sex inside marriage and that it is against divine law to practise birth control. In a densely populated world what are the alternatives? Disease, starvation, and war most likely.

I believe that sex repression and not sex freedom is a contributing factor to crime. Of course this is another large area to cover, but I feel we need a more modern approach to the many facets of sexuality.

Certainly people should not be continuously spied upon and persecuted by puritanical sections of society and made outcasts, or be made prisoners of conscience because of political or moral views. Sex repression and poverty are two of the main causes of crime.

Poverty of the pocket is one thing, but worse is poverty of the intellect and now we have a glut of it. People are measured more by the size of their bank accounts than their intelligence.

The right to be and the right of free will and self-determination must be paramount in any Bill of Rights. None should be judged by race, religion, politics, or sex, but only by whether one is a criminal or non-criminal.

We are all under pressure from an interfering media. Everyone is criticising or being criticised because no one

seems to know, or care, what another person's rights are. It appears to me that "civil-rights" is dead and that intelligence, free-will, and liberty are in chains. Only a democracy based on merit and a Bill of Rights can succeed and survive. The extreme right based on power and greed and the extreme left based on much the same in a different-looking package destroy the democratic centre in their eagerness to out-do each other.

Two ends devouring the middle is no answer on a dying planet. The main aim should be for all the world's governments to co-operate in saving this planet. Man is polluting the air we breathe and cutting down the "lungs of

the earth" — the tropical forests. Mankind is largely the cause of his own suffering so men must learn to live together in order to ensure a better future. A Bill of Rights will lay down our modern "Ten Commandments" which would be more in keeping with the present — a morality made of the basic cement of "Live and let Live".

*Brian Legge is now retired after working for 25 years in London Transport. His grandfather was an accomplished artist and Brian now devotes much of his time to writing and painting.*

## BRITISH TELECOM & VIDEO ON DEMAND

Michael Plumbe

You may have heard about the Ministerial decision (mainly made, I understand, by Michael Heseltine) to prevent British Telecom (BT) from developing its "video-on-demand" system. I wrote to BT about this, and have had an interesting conversation with them.

The technology exists now for anyone with a telephone to dial up a central point and to request that a film be transmitted to, and be seen on, the home TV set. This technology is largely a British development, and is at present unique in that it is the only system which allows all the viewers to start and finish individual transmissions at any moment chosen by them, overlapping their access with any others wanting the same film. For the technical, the system works like multi-terminal access to the disc on a computer, where one operator can look at, say, a customer account whilst overlapping the search with any by other operators. It is even possible to make the film "pause" for a call of nature or to make a cup of tea. The system cannot work over very long distances, but it **does** work over the existing copper lines which go into **most** homes, and **most** exchanges in the country can provide the service.

The Board of Trade (BoT) is not stopping BT from offering this service now, and experimental areas do have it.

The other service is called "simultaneous reception". This in fact is the "ordinary" TV we have long been used to, where all those watching a programme all see the same thing at the same time. We have of course the four present normal TV channels, and additional channels are being offered and installed by fibre-optic cable and satellite transmitter companies.

What the BoT has said is that BT **are not allowed** to offer simultaneous transmission for as long as it takes for the cable and

satellite companies, most of which are American, to become established. How long will this be? Months? Years?

Massive investment is of course needed for development of both systems. BT, who have a natural advantage in that they already have the video-on-demand (VoD) system ready, say that they cannot go ahead with offering it without being able to offer simultaneous reception (SR) at the same time. A significant amount of revenue lies with the SR system, and they cannot justify further work on VoD unless they can count on immediate revenue from SR. This the BoT are saying they cannot have.

Being a xenophobe, it disturbs me greatly that an excellent British development is being stifled in order to allow American competition to establish itself.

What I find even more appalling is that all our pavements and roads are being dug up (and many trees are being destroyed) to install fibre-optic cables, when the existing copper wires are still perfectly serviceable with the latest technology. Yes, fibre-optic transmission is much more efficient, and, from a "scratch" position is much cheaper to install than copper. Yet why change an existing resource willy-nilly if the change is not necessary?

There is, of course, more to it. One other aspect is that of two-way communication with the home, and devices in the home such as the meters and the TV, for automatic meter reading and home shopping. Also for the technical, VoD signals at present are analogue, but BT plan, in due course, to make everything digital.

All these things are ultimately best catered for with fibre-optic cable. However, there is no need for the headlong rush now happening, especially in the domestic market.

My view of the Minister who is hobbling yet another British invention is pretty low.

## FISHING

Walt Hare

The fishing dispute should have been seen as a golden opportunity to show how useful the EU could be. The fact that there has been silence strongly suggests that much of the talk about the economic and political advantages of the EU is hardly serious.

The basic cause of trouble is the unrestricted hunting of fish which is regarded by everybody as a "free resource" available for "plunder" by anybody with the desire and technology to do so. Conservation is of no **immediate** benefit to anybody.

To anybody with confidence in markets the solution is obvious. The fish should be "owned" by somebody who would

have an interest in **both** exploitation and conservation — they would then balance the two in their own interests rather than because of some nebulous altruism.

So why not set up companies, for instance, "The North Sea Fish Resources Corporation", "Irish Box Sea Enterprises Plc.", and similar, with the exclusive right to control fishing in specified areas? They would sell licences to engage in commercial fishing in "their" waters and have the right to specify what species and sizes of fish could be caught. There would, of course, inevitably be normal commercial competition in world markets between these companies because fishermen would seek out the company

from which they could get the best fish for the cheapest licence. Their commercial performance would depend on getting the balance between exploitation and conservation right in the long run. And it would not matter which countries the fishing boats came from, so there would be no need for governments to be involved.

This is not possible at present because no national government has jurisdiction over the whole of each of the "natural" fishing grounds. But the "super-government" EU could have such jurisdiction so long as the individual governments agree to merge their present individual jurisdictions (and simply "assume" those required in any "unclaimed" areas).

So where is the EU when it is really needed?

## CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

Michael Plumbe

### Immigration and Europe

As individualists, members of our Society might be expected to say that a man may take up residence wherever he chooses. This is in line with our policy statement: all private citizens should have the freedom to act as they wish.

Mercifully this is followed by the caveat: provided their actions do not harm others.

Populations have always ebbed and flowed across the world. The latest theory I have read convincingly suggests that all modern man is descended from a single woman (call her Eve) in Africa. My goodness, how her offspring have multiplied and spread.

One is always more comfortable living with one's peers, in terms of background, relative wealth, religion, and, dare I mention it, race. In a book by Desmond Morris (*The Human Zoo*, I think), the idea is put forward that, starting with a group of ten, a single foreigner is welcomed as a curiosity. Two foreigners are tolerated. More than two foreigners become a threat, and are rejected. This is an "animal" reaction and has not (yet) been bred out of us. The reaction involves many differences, even including such small things as bodily characteristics (e.g., facial shape and odour) and feeding habits.

Groups or "sets" of people tend to build up quite naturally over time. In Great Britain, although the people are of many origins, we had, I submit, at the turn of this century achieved a reasonably stable "population equilibrium". Yet, within this, Irish immigrants to England were much resented in places, Jews tended to keep themselves separate, and there was rivalry between various religions.

Different parts of the land (such as Wales, Scotland, Cornwall, Ireland) had their own languages and cultures. So we had the position of a number of groups of people, largely of similar bodily characteristics and feeding habits, of religions based at least on the Old Testament, and of laws of common derivation, co-existing on our islands in tolerable harmony.

Personally I believe in the right to dissociate as much as to associate. If a group of working-men choose to exclude professional men from their club, should they be forced to change? I was amused in this context to read about the recent rows where some London clubs exclude, or make special rules for, women. The woman President of a ladies' club wrote to *The Times* saying that, in her club, men guests were allowed to make use of all the facilities (including no doubt the grand staircase, if there is one, but not I suggest the ladies' loo), so lady guests in men's clubs should be able to do the same. Yet she made no mention of any possibility that men might actually ever be admitted as Members to her club. She did not mean to be "Chauvinist" (or whatever the feminine term is), but good for her.

Let me also mention the case of two heterosexual girls in America who were prosecuted and convicted because, when they wanted a lodger in their private flat, they refused to take in a Lesbian. What a travesty of "justice" this is.

The good people of Sark are extremely worried that they will be unable to retain the exclusive nature of their island if they are forced to abandon the rules governing the purchase of property on it. This may be "dog-in-the-manger", but who is to blame them? Their life is tranquil; why should they be disturbed? They are also much troubled by implementing directives from Brussels. Their legal system is simple, and they neither need nor want a flood of further laws imposed on them.

People coming here are escaping evils. In some cases there is a real threat to their safety, perhaps because of their opposition to an established regime; in many other cases they are merely seeking a better life or families are uniting. However, by adding to the crowd on our tiny islands and often depleting our resources, they are materially harming us.

What I think is much more important is that the incomers are threatening to disrupt the established order. They often do not wish to obey our laws. They may kill animals in an unacceptable way. Some of their religions are quite different from, and alien to, the ones already here. They speak strange tongues, and want schooling for their offspring to be conducted other than in English. Change of course is inevitable, but it is the present *rate* of change which is causing so much distress. Travel and communication facilities now make it all too easy for strangers in large numbers to move into a new area. We need time to assimilate change; yet this is exactly what we are not given.

Our Government goes out of its way to make life easy for such people, often to the detriment of the "indigenous" population. In my view, we sometimes now have the situation where there is discrimination against the "ethnic majority". One writer to the *Daily Mail* (a Mr Joseph Rose) suggests that social benefit should not be given to incomers until they have been employed or maintained by the people or organisations which brought them here for at least a year. What a good idea.

Inevitably, introducing or retaining controls inhibits freedom of movement, and causes hardship in individual cases (particularly where asylum is sought or families are uniting). Yet I firmly believe that mass movements of people do much more harm than good. I hate to say it but I almost think we should ring-fence our islands, which luckily we could easily do, and say "enough is enough!" We do not want Mr Santer's open doors.

### International Crime and International Business

Let me now turn to another subject which I find most worrying. Both international crime and international business know no frontiers (although groups and territories are formed, and fought over). Modern facilities mean that people, resources, funds and profits can be moved round the world with ease. Large operations can keep governments in thrall (see Matthew Parris's article in our last issue), cause shortages and surpluses, or even make or break a country. Sometimes I wonder where the line is to be drawn between what is and what is not criminal activity when operations on this kind of scale are concerned. Hence my perhaps cynical treatment of crime and business under one heading.

I think all of us would like to see government being handled at the lowest possible level, so that we actually have some control over our own destinies. The idea of a massive, central bureaucracy dictating how we shall live is anathema to most members of our Society. Yet, what is to be done where we are up against international operations?

Governments in general can only police their own territories, in terms of both catching criminals and taxing businesses. Open borders only make the situation worse. In passing, I note that in Germany and France there are proposals to make more spot-checks on possible illegal immigrants (no doubt identified by their identity cards, or lack thereof) within the borders of each country. The ironic effect of less border control is thus to increase, perhaps significantly, police interference in daily life.

I have no answer to offer for the dilemma here, except to suggest a combined World Police Force and Taxing Office. Shall I be drummed out of the Society for mentioning such terrible words?

### Jail

Private Clegg and two other soldiers have been jailed for murder. How many others have been convicted in similar circumstances?

In a television programme a "jury" of 100 voted 56 to 44 that Clegg should be released. This was I suggest a "gut reaction". Listening to the actual law as propounded and handed down by the Courts and the Lords, the law is quite clear. The offence was murder and I believe guilt was established.

Yet what a terrible travesty of natural justice has occurred. If you give young men lethal weapons and train them to kill, they will kill. Then of course mistakes happen, innocent people die, and brave young men become "murderers". It is fatuous later to decide that this shot was legal and that one was not; in the heat of

an "engagement" there is no time for such niceties. It is very difficult to say that the men should have acted necessarily in any other way (yellow card or not) when they were confronted with a situation where they had live guns in their hands and a possible enemy coming at them. It is alleged that some of the young men were afterwards less than truthful about the actual events. Frankly, so might I be.

The people who should now be in jail are the law-makers. These are the people who put the soldiers in the awful position they now face. The law under which these men were convicted is obnoxious, and those who made and implemented the law should take the blame and suffer the imprisonment.

I wonder how Ministers would react if summonses were issued against them on these lines? Would they ignore the Courts, or protest that the Courts were simply being impudent?

It is sad to read that Private Clegg is shortly to be sacked from his army career. The Army says it has no choice where there is a murder conviction. Has the law NO mercy?

I see in the *Sunday Express* the story of a British couple whose sons were killed in a car crash in Crete. A Greek court ordered the culprits who caused the crash to pay compensation of £21,000. They refused and now face jail. However, if the Britons are to have the jail sentence enforced, they must first pay for the upkeep in jail of the prisoners while the sentenced is served.

Perhaps some good could come out of the EU if Greek law could be made more "victim-friendly".

### Meat

My butcher tells me he is no longer allowed to sell rabbit, suet, un-eviscerated poultry, or pork chops with the kidney still attached. Pure beef sausages also seem to be off the menu. No doubt this is Brussels "nannying" again. I must report the matter to Christopher Booker.

## LETTERS

Re. "Morality is More than Me" (Rev. Bryan Rippin) [*The Individual*, January 1995].

Like Michael Plumbe, our chairman, I was brought up in the Church of England. I was in a church choir for twenty-five years, man and boy. I attended two or three services every Sunday: with the reading from the Bible and sermons involved. I find it so sad that though I no longer believe in heaven, etc., I have more faith in the power of many of today's Bishops' "God of Love" than they have.

Everywhere in the New Testament is the virtue of compassion extolled. There are also many warnings against egalitarianism. In the parable of the talents Christ praises the rich man for his industry and condemns the poor man for his envy and ingratitude.

Nowhere in the Bible is the assumption that love and compassion are enforceable — an assumption underlying state welfare. Only "In the eyes of God all men are equal". This is rightly saying that we should respect all men. I might even extend this to other animals. Of course, some of the wealthy are greedy, but enforcement only generates the resentment and hate of both those who pay, and those who become dependent on welfare. The most powerful motive for greed and the most evil form of greed is envy. "What I cannot have I will destroy." By attempting to justify the greed of the poor, welfarism creates a greedy society.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." I suppose that modern bishops think that Christ was stupid to say this. The only virtue in receiving lies in the fact that the receiver has inspired the love (compassion) of the giver. That is why I was taught to say "Please" and "Thank You", which is pointless if you have a "Right" to demand whatever is supplied.

"Give unto Caesar that which is Caesar's (taxation for defence) and unto God that which is God's (love and charity)." Are the Bishops so convinced of the powerlessness of their God that their "Almighty" needs Caesar to enforce His laws. The history of Hitler and Stalin teaches us not to trust the Caesars of this world to enforce His laws. It also teaches us that God can overpower Caesar. The Thatcherite and Christian principle is for Caesar to mind his own business, which is now so pathetically neglected, of crucifying thieves (and building roads). I believe that the Bishops' God is a great power for good. And I find it so sad that there are the likes of them running the established church. You seldom hear them stooping to beg for voluntary kindness and charity which is the only possible manifestation of their God. That would really be minding God's business of promoting love. Instead, they promote the envy of the lower paid in the gas industry, whose union no doubt blackmailed weak bosses into paying them more than they were worth.

The Church is just another example of a nationalised industry — the C. of E. — promoting their envy which was the source of the political power of Hitler and Stalin. To retain political power the established church is nailing their own God of love to the cross of envy, as the established church did in Caesar's day.

David D Wedgwood

21 The Barons, St. Margarets, Middx., TW1 2AP

Thank you for the latest *Individual* (Jan. 1995), but I cannot agree with "God & Morality — Help or Hindrance" at least in the strong implication that God is indeed a hindrance to true morality.



If we actually look at the Christian Bible we see many more commandments than the "Ten Commandments" which are of use for modern-day Man. The breath of life will go back to God, who gave it to us. Nothing can be a clearer statement of the relevance of God to everything.

Vincent van Gogh wrote, "The best way to know God is to love many things"; George Washington stated, "It is impossible to govern the world without God"; Abraham Lincoln stated, "My great concern is not whether God is on our side, my great concern is to be on God's side"; Albert Einstein said, "God is a scientist, not a magician"; Benjamin Franklin said, "I have lived a long time and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see that God governs in the affairs of men"; H. G. Wells stated, "Religion is the first thing and the last thing and until a man has found God and been found by God, he begins at no beginning and works to no end".

These great men noticed that God was necessary for society as well as individuals. As the Bible says, reason is a gift of God to Man. But without the word of God as well, what one man says is reasonable another man will say is stupid and not believe it.

The hand of God has touched my life some years ago in a prison cell. God can make pain and sickness work for good. A lot of people have learned more of God since coming to their sickbed than in all their life before. God can make sorrow work for good. God can even make sin work for good. It is in sin that a man finds the real wonder of the grace and forgiveness of God.

He might have different names in different societies, but none can really function "by bread alone" — without God.

Peter Hakala (L44089)

C-Wing, H.M.P. 5, Love Lane, Wakefield, WF2 9AG

Miss Karyn Barton of 30, Antrim Road, Lincoln, LN5 8TF, a student, wrote to our Chairman, Michael Plumbe, in January 1995, expressing concern about the growing use of CCTV Camera Surveillance. She pointed out that the organisation Liberty is gathering evidence to take a case to the European Commission on Human Rights.

She enclosed some details of proposed regulations to govern the use of CCTV surveillance.

The Secretary of State shall make regulations to control the use of any apparatus ..... and such regulation shall provide for:

- (a) restrictions on such apparatus to prevent, where practicable, the surveillance of private residential residences without the consent of the majority of the occupiers of those premises;
- (b) the provision for the display of notices to the public of the existence of any system using the apparatus;
- (c) the selection, training, and supervision of the operators of the apparatus;
- (d) arrangements for the storage of, and access to, any recordings made;
- (e) arrangements for the access to the recordings by the subjects of those recordings;
- (f) arrangement for the destruction of the recordings.

It was also suggested that there should be research into the various effects and uses of CCTV in public places.

Any serious opinions on this subject by members of the Society are probably best sent to "Liberty" who have already given the matter some consideration.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *THE POWER TO DESTROY: A study of the British tax system*

by Prof. D. R. Myddelton

The title of this book is derived from an observation by Chief Justice John Marshall of the United States; "The power to tax is the power to destroy". This is the second edition of a book first published in 1969. The new edition is not only radically revised and updated but also substantially abridged, for the excellent reason that so many of the reforms advocated by the author in 1969 have since been implemented.

*The Power to Destroy* is the first in the series of Armour papers being published by the Society for Individual Freedom on libertarian themes. The name of the series is that of a member of the Society whose generous bequest has made this publishing venture possible.

The author reaches his proposed reforms through a series of chapters on principles: progressive taxation; taxing capital; currency debasement; company taxation; avoidance and evasion; and government spending. This last is the key to reform. As a proportion of gross domestic product (gross depreciation / capital consumption) general government expenditure was 44% in 1978-79 and 1979-80 and 44.25% in 1993-94, the last completed year at the time of writing this note; so after fifteen years in office the Government has not even succeeded in reducing the share of total output it appropriates for its own purposes. The more realistic comparison is between general government expenditure and net domestic product (net of depreciation / capital

consumption); on this basis general government expenditure was, and is, absorbing half total output or more. What the Adam Smith Institute calls Freedom Day, the day in the year when the taxpayer stops working for the government and starts working for himself, is at the end of June or in July. After fifteen years of lip service to reform, government spending cuts still do not mean what "spending cuts" mean to any corporate or individual taxpayer, but merely reductions in the previously planned rate of growth.

Once effective constraints on government spending provide room for tax reduction, which forms of tax cut should have priority? Professor Myddelton identifies "progressive" (or graduated) taxes (the higher rate of income tax), inheritance tax and capital gains tax as prime candidates for abolition and corporation tax as a candidate for reduction and reform. The damage done by these taxes is disproportionate to their modest yields and their abolition or reduction would be the "best buy", the best way of using a given amount of tax revenue foregone, both for the taxpayer and for the economy.

Professor Myddelton has succeeded in making a complex subject intelligible and interesting. This is a matter which affects everyone, and libertarians most of all. I warmly commend this book.

Dr. Barry Bracewell-Milnes

[Published by the SIF, 1994. The hardback edition is £9.95, the paperback edition £6.95, both post-free from the Society for Individual Freedom, 104 Drive Mansions, London SW6 5JH.]

## THE BASTARDS

by Teresa Gorman MP (and Heather Kirby)

This book was written in the three weeks following the House of Commons vote on the Maastricht Treaty. There are a few signs of this haste, for instance in giving 1941 instead of 1931 [p. 110] as the date of coming off the Gold Standard, and calling Edward Heath the Leader of the House rather than Father of the House [p. 121]. Also an index would have been useful in view of the large number of interesting people and events referred to.

But these are the most serious shortcomings and quite forgivable in the circumstances. The title is, of course, derived from the Prime Minister's indiscreet, but supposedly off-the-record remark referring to the cabinet ministers who were resisting European integration and the Maastricht treaty.

The account starts with the fall of Margaret Thatcher and ends, with the final defeat of the rebels by a vote of confidence, in August 1993. There are many frank and interesting comments on the personalities and behaviour of well-known political figures and associated characters, such as journalists. And, of course, an intimate and detailed account of the dramatic events surrounding the change of Prime Minister and the political in-fighting over Britain's place in Europe and the Maastricht treaty. A partisan rather than a strictly impartial historical account, but the intelligent reader might, in fact, prefer this approach because appropriate allowances can be made using his/her own judgement.

Perhaps even more interesting, and significant in the long run, are the insights into the actual working of Parliament and the (supposedly) democratic process. Particularly significant are the accounts of the machinations of the Whips, the use of Ministerial appointments, and the prospects of knighthoods, to procure compliance with government policies. This resulted in numerous last-minute changes of mind and apparently paradoxical voting behaviour on the part of many "Honourable Members".

With one exception, due to legal considerations, all participants in the events described are identified and there are some revealing lists of members of various groupings such as Fresh Start and No Turning Back.

An easy, interesting, and revealing read which can be warmly recommended to anybody interested in the detailed workings of government as well as the particular events under consideration.

Paul Anderton

[Published by Pan Books, London 1993, £6. Copies can be ordered from Mrs Teresa Gorman at the House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA. Members of the SIF can have a signed copy; give your name, of course.]

## LIBERTARIANISM: THE PERVERSION OF LIBERTY

by Peter Schwartz

Easily the most important individualist philosophic thinker this century is the controversial and innovative Ayn Rand. Hated by collectivists, her clear systematic approach has given millions the "Philosophy for Living on Earth".

However, a little known but very important fact about Rand is that she totally rejected the Libertarian movement and saw them as advocates of a pseudo-liberty who ignore the essential

philosophic foundations upon which a true individualist system would need to be based.

Essential reading on this is "Libertarianism: The Perversion of Liberty" by Peter Schwartz. Schwartz is chairman of the Ayn Rand Institute and in this critique he identifies the philosophic failings of Libertarianism.

Beginning by identifying that libertarians do not hold a well defined and contextual view from which a position of anti-statism can be derived, Schwartz quotes Sheldon Richman, formerly vice-chairman of the (American) Libertarian party: "libertarian principle and the dynamics of social change dictate that we be perpetual state haters"; and also from the ten points of the Libertarian party caucus: "there can be no other political objective consistent with individual liberty than the complete abolition of the state ..... the idea of the minimal state requires the acceptance of a residual ruling class ...."

Libertarians, therefore are not anti statism, just dogmatically anti-state. And it was Richman who described the Reagan government's overthrow of the Marxist regime in Granada as "reckless and trigger-happy" and "having no foundation in international law"; further, "... the U.S. government should unilaterally abandon all *nuclear* weapons .... the desire to support the U.S. buildup is based on the faulty notion that the U.S. government is "on our side" — that it will use these weapons ..... to defend the state; if libertarians truly regard the state as their enemy, they cannot support its holding of *nuclear* weapons". Well .... Hot Dog; if that doesn't take the biscuit; but how do you like this: Ed Clark, a former Libertarian party candidate; "in the libertarian point of view, we don't support any moral codes. We support political liberty" (!) This sounds like political correctness to me. What if I, as an objectivist, argue that I am a sovereign individual; will some non-state lynch mob picket my house until I change my selfish ways in the "greater" interests of a libertarian society? This is an important point, and Schwartz faces it head on; the concepts of reason and individual rights, he says ".... require a morality in which the standard of value is man's life. It requires a morality which recognises that human survival depends at root upon the use of the mind and which, as a result, holds rationality as a cardinal virtue. Under this approach, physical force — the obliterator of the very possibility of reason — is anti-life and is amoral. And liberty, the absence of force, is then indeed a prerequisite for virtue. But if reason is not a moral value, if virtue is based on dogmatically asserted duties or on subjectively asserted desires, then human understanding is irrelevant — is, in fact an obstacle — to morality. Which means not only that there are no grounds for barring force in human relations, but that force becomes indispensable in obtaining compliance with unprovable moral imperatives." These are crucially important areas for pro-individual debate, and ones which are never examined by the "do your own thing" libertarians.

The uncrowned king of the libertarian left, Walter Block, who, in his book "Defending the Undefendable" actually praises blackmailers, is identified by Schwartz, not as the advocate of freedom as which libertarians blindly worship him, but as an activist subtly undermining standards of rational human judgement. Block lavishes his praise on pimps, blackmailers, counterfeiters, litterers, prostitutes, the lot, all in a "no-one understands them" adolescent manner. Never does Block put forward a weighty case for the repeal of laws against prostitution, for instance, he merely showers more praise on blackmailers and counterfeiters than he does for the struggling and talented.

To quote Schwartz; "Who qualifies for Block's accolades? Only the dregs of society. They are applauded, not in spite of their worthlessness, but because of it. It is because they are regarded as scum that Block wants to elevate them to respectability — in order to debase the very idea of respectability."

Therefore, the genuine, benevolent, pro-individual should think long and hard about the description they give their philosophic position: "genuine advocates of capitalism

misrepresent their own views if they use the word 'libertarian' to describe it. The term no longer has the positive connotations it once did, when it referred broadly to people holding an essentially economic defence of capitalism. While it is true that such individuals lack an appropriate philosophical foundation for their positions, they are none the less light years in intellectual distance from today's libertarians. They are not anarchists or nihilists, and they do not interpret liberty as the elimination of the 'constraints' of reality."

This is provocative stuff, well written, well researched, and in his parting salvo he concludes that "Libertarianism should be left to stand naked, to allow the public to see it for what it actually is, without any figleaf of respectability to conceal its brazen irrationality. Liberty is too precious a value for its genuine defenders to allow it to be claimed by libertarians."

A critique of libertarianism such as this is long overdue and has remained largely unknown to British free marketers since first published in 1986. Reading this book will cause you to rethink exactly who are the true allies in the battle for individual freedom and liberty.

"Libertarianism: The Perversion of Liberty" is published in America, but copies are available, price £5.50, from 109, Benton Road, High Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7DT.

Philip A Loads

*Philip A. Loads is the Northern Regional Representative for FOREST. He was a founder member of the United Kingdom Objectivist Association, and is the creative force behind the London-based rock band Izabella von Crippen.*

## NOTICES

### THE SOCIETY'S MEETINGS

Our next Luncheon will be at the **House of Lords** on **Wednesday 26th April 1995** at 12.30 for 1.00 p.m.

The speaker will be **Neil Hamilton MP**.

The price per person is £22, which includes one glass of wine, lager or soft drink. The menu is: Stilton and Celery soup; Steak and Mushroom Pie with Ale, Fresh Seasonal Vegetables; Ice Cream Coupe; Coffee.

Please book your place **by 22nd April** sending your cheque, payable to *Society for Individual Freedom*, to Miss Lucy Ryder, 21C, Lindfield Gardens, London, NW3 6PX (tel: 0171 435 6973). If you require a vegetarian or other special diet, please let Lucy know with your booking.

The provisional subject of Neil Hamilton's talk is "Resigning Issues" as this applies to MPs in both this country and abroad. "Are we losing valuable talent in the (hopeless) quest for moral perfection?" This topic could, of course, be changed in response to any late developments in public interests.

Afterwards there will be an Executive Committee meeting in another room in the Palace of Westminster. Those concerned will receive details.

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Society for Individual Freedom will take place on **Wednesday, 24th May 1995** at 6.30 p.m. at 17 Chiltern Court, Baker Street, London NW1. Please bring with you some means of identification. Agenda:

1. Chairman's opening remarks.
2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Treasurer's Report.
5. Election of the following: (a) President, (b) Vice-Presidents, (c) Treasurer, (d) Chairman of the National Council, (e) members of the National Council, one-third of whom are due to retire while being eligible for re-election.

Nominations, with the names, addresses and signatures of nominees, proposers and seconders, must be sent to the Society at 104 Drive Mansions, London SW6 5JH to arrive not later than Wednesday, 17th May 1995.

The Society's A.G.M. will be followed by a short meeting of the National Council.

### OTHER NOTICES

*Enclosed with this issue* there should be a leaflet about the Society. Please pass it on to someone who will join, or join yourself if you are not already a member. Thank you.

We intend to enclose also a leaflet advertising some excellent book offers available from the Institute of Economic Affairs. If you fail to get this leaflet, please telephone the IEA on 0171 799 3745 and ask for details of their special offers on IEA classics.

#### *Progress on medical information*

The Chairman of South West Surrey Health Authority has welcomed our report and says "It is, indeed, very important that as much relevant information about treatments and medications as possible is made available to doctors and patients both to ensure that the best treatment is available and to avoid waste. I note that your research indicates that a good deal of information concerning long-term consequences is not now available. This is a serious problem which needs addressing."

The pressure group MIND are putting our findings to their policy committee. Their Policy Director agrees that if the information called for in our submission were to become available, this would be of considerable assistance to them in achieving many of their own detailed aims.

We have received a three-page letter discussing our submission from Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, Baroness Cumberlege. This letter outlined existing NHS structure which the Department of Health obviously considers to be satisfactory. Unfortunately this only described the existing organisation which is currently giving tacit support to the sorry lack of information which fills us with disquiet.

Our main point is that there is missing information concerning probable and possible long-term consequences, success, failure and side-effects of tranquillisers, anti-depressants, fertility drugs, ECT, and many other treatments which is not available anywhere to either doctors or patients. We have evidence to show that when doctors ask their controlling bodies for such scientific information they are unable to obtain it. From this it could be presumed that this information does not exist or that its availability is being controlled.

The letter from the Minister is more understandable in the light of what Charles Medway (Social Audit) said in the 1993 Open Government Seminar. He pointed out that drug

companies pay for the civil servants who draft letters from Ministers and that "the industry ..... prefers patients to think of medicines wholly in terms of benefits and not risks." This would suggest a patronising attitude lacking in respect for patients' ability to appreciate the overall situation.

Further action is required to enable the Department of Health to both face up to the problem we have highlighted and then to propose actions to fill the gap in information which currently makes it impossible for doctors properly to fulfil the spirit of the Patient's Charter.

*Free Life* is a quarterly journal devoted entirely to the discussion of issues concerned with freedom and liberty. It is edited by Sean Gabb who has made several contributions to *The Individual*. The current, April 1995, edition contains articles on Armed Revolution in the USA, Consideration of Vegetarians, and a "PC" version of Red Riding Hood, among others, plus numerous book reviews. Subscription is £10 per year from Libertarian Alliance, 25, Chapter Chambers, Esterbrooke Street, London, SW1P 4NN. Tel: 0171-821-5502

*The Anti-Maastricht Alliance's* talks continue in the Red Lion pub in Whitehall (near the Parliament Square end), on Wednesdays, starting at 7 p.m.. For further information please contact Dr Helen Szamuely on 0181-740-7194.

12th April: *Economic Alternatives to the European Union*: Dr Brian Burkitt, Bradford Economist.

17th May: *The European Union and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*: Dr Mark Almond, Oxford historian.

14th June: *The fate of democracy in an age of wasteful bureaucrats*: Prof. Kenneth Minogue, London School of Economics

*The Anti-Common Market League* has a meeting on Thursday, 27th April, 7.30 p.m. at the House of Commons when Christopher Gill M.P. will speak on *A Prosperous Britain outside the E.C.* If you want to attend please contact the ACML on 0181 997 4303.

We are pleased to note that *The European Herbal Practitioners Alliance* has been *completely successful* in maintaining the *status quo* in regard to herbal medicines against "control" amounting to suppression by proposed European legislation on medicines. For further information contact Kevin Embling-Evans, Secretary, "EHPA", 18 Sussex Square, Brighton BN2 5AA, Tel. 01243-267126.

*The Bush Telegraph* is a quarterly magazine, largely in colour, devoted to the legalisation and use of cannabis. A lot of ideas and information. Motto: "The History of Liberty is the History of Resistance". £2 per copy or £7.50 for the next four issues from Box B.T., 101, Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RG.

As announced in the September 1994 issue, *The International Secretariat for Human Rights (ISHR)* now has

an office in London. Glen Calderwood is the International Campaigns Officer and has written to the Society offering his services to the Society or any member on any relevant issue. The address is; ISHR, St. George's House, 14, Wells Street, London W1P 3FP and **not** as given in the September issue [sorry! — ed.].

This Society held a successful conference on "Intolerance in 1995" on 4th February in the New Cavendish Club near Marble Arch and intend to hold an Autumn lecture on a human rights topic.

*The IEA conference*, mentioned in the previous *Individual* under the title "The Good Samaritan and the Welfare State" for Monday March 20th, was attended to overflowing after a change of title to "Dismantling' the Welfare State: 'Tough Love' or the Good Samaritan?" which apparently provoked more interest. Shows how important titles and first impressions are!

Three SIF members attended and made some useful points in the discussions after the very illuminating talks by the scheduled speakers. One was on the lines of David Wedgwood's letter. Others expressed concern in two main areas.

The apparently automatic assumption was that the alternative to the "Welfare State" was "Charity" — largely Church-sponsored. But another alternative is self-help in the form of communal arrangements for education and health in particular — which flourished to a large extent, largely ignored by main-stream historians, before the State and bureaucracy encroached and took over.

The other was the increasing state participation in charities in the form of contributions and/or contracts for "social work" — e.g. children's homes, probation hostels. The charity representatives seemed quite sanguine about this, assuring everybody that it did not compromise their independence or inclination to criticise government policies.

And, in a way, they are right. The fact that education and health is almost completely taxpayer-financed certainly does NOT stop teachers, nurses, and doctors "criticising" the government. Far from it. But the "criticism" is almost invariably on the lines that not enough "government" money is being spent on what they do! Not exactly "fundamental" criticism such as that some government-supported charity is no longer necessary or even now positively undesirable.

As with Arts and Sport, the best way the government can support charity would be to leave more money in citizens' pockets and let them spend it on whatever they judge to be the most deserving causes.

## *The Individual*

Views expressed in *The Individual* are not necessarily those of the editor or of the Society but are printed as a contribution to debate. Letters are welcome, as are articles. All contributions should be sent to the editor: Paul Anderton, 15 Norfolk Park Drive, Sheffield S2 3QG.

The annual subscription for membership of the Society is £12. Those under 21 years of age may pay £6 (date of birth required). Cheques payable to the Society. A leaflet about the Society is available on request. Ask for a form for a banker's order if you would like to pay in this way.

**Society for Individual Freedom**

104 Drive Mansions, London SW6 5JH. Tel: 0171-371 7530